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Who was Shakespeare?

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# WHO WAS SHAKESPEARE?

## AN APPEAL TO FACT AND REASON.

BY

PROFESSOR GUSTAVE HOLZER

(*Heidelberg*).

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

BY

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LONDON:

ROBERT BANKS & SON,

RACQUET COURT, FLEET STREET, E.C.

*PRICE THREEPENCE.*

1910.

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# AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

THE discovery of the Mountjoy-Bellott Manuscripts in the Public Record Office made by Professor Charles William Wallace, Ph.D., an account of which is given in an article in the March 1910 number of *Harper's Magazine*, instead of throwing any fresh light on the Shakespeare question, has, on the contrary, accentuated the case against William Shakspere, and has simply contributed to increase the number of sceptics.

How shall we in Germany regard this? Shall we quietly accept the views so triumphantly flourished in England? Shall we join in the chorus of celebration of the Silver-Street-Monkwell-Street revelation? Voices loud and strong are raised among us against this fantastic jubilation, and the following discussion gives expression to the protest.

G. HOLZER.

Heidelberg, May, 1910.

# TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

THE following pages will give some impression of the progress which the Bacon-Shakespeare discussion has made in Germany. The most distinguished representatives,—vindicators of Bacon,—are Professor Holzer, of Heidelberg, and Dr. Konrad Meier, of Dresden. Dr. Meier has written a learned and scholarly work on the classic element in *Hamlet*, and points out a large number of classic allusions and classic forms of phraseology which have never been indicated by any English annotators of *Hamlet*. Dr. Holzer has written many pamphlets, a list of which is given at the end of this book.

The belief that Bacon was the true Shakespeare has now won so many advocates—highly endowed with intellectual gifts and culture—that one may reasonably demand that its arguments should be dispassionately discussed; and surely no fairer demand could be made. It is not self-evident that the greatest productions of all literature proceeded from such a man as William Shakspere. Not one of his biographers have ever discovered any indication that he was even moderately educated. It is an open question whether he could read or write, and if we look, as Professor Dowden does, in the poems for indications of a "tangible personality" (see page 21), we find many such indications, but not one that fits the person of William Shakspere; not one that is not entirely consistent with Bacon's authorship. Professor Dowden's article in the *Contemporary Review* for November, 1908, on the self-revealment of Shakespeare and other authors in their works, is a most interesting object lesson in the fruitlessness of the quest for the personality of William Shakspere in the Shakespeare plays and poems. Professor Dowden finds that the author of the plays was humorous and witty; that he portrays the passion of lovers so accurately and profoundly that we must conclude that the tender passion must at one time have entered into his experience. He was master of irony, as *Hamlet* proves; he loved flowers as Perdita loved them; he was more conservative than democratic; he sympathised with the sorrows and troubles of the poor; he disliked snobs and distrusted citizen politics; he valued rank and degree; he had a deep sense of reverence and spiritual mystery. We cannot find whether he liked cold mutton; he

certainly fed deeply on celestial ambrosia. This is the sum of Professor Dowden's attempts to find a "tangible personality," and it will be observed that every one of these traits, so far as they are personal at all, points more in the direction of St. Albans than of Stratford-on-Avon. But Professor Dowden must know quite well—learned scholar and acute critic as he is—that other indications of a "tangible personality" may be found for "Shakespeare." *Ex. gr.*, the poet was a trained lawyer, revelling in law talk and never making mistakes in it. He was familiar with classic history and classic authors, Greek as well as Latin, and may be presumed to have acquired or perfected his classic lore by a University education. He was (so Cowden Clarke presumes) so familiar with the different stages of a lawyer's education, from school to college and Inns of Court, that there is "ground for belief that Shakespeare, after a University course, may have subsequently kept terms at one of the Inns of Court." He was remarkably familiar with Court life, as only a resident at Court or in Court circles was likely to be. He was familiar with colloquial French, and knew something of Italian and Spanish. He seems to have travelled in France and Italy, and learnt by personal observation the special local features of Venice, Padua, Milan, Verona, etc. He was deeply imbued with Platonic philosophy as expounded in untranslated works of Plato. He seems to have somehow become acquainted with Bacon's philosophy, so as to use some of its most characteristic ideas and utterances. He was on terms of personal intimacy with some of the highest nobles of the land—with Southampton, Lord Pembroke, Lord Montgomery. Here are some finger-prints by which identification may be obtained.

All this Professor Dowden knows as well as I do—doubtless better. Why did he omit to notice all these "self-revealing" features in the Shakespeare plays? I can only conceive of one answer;—the learned Professor does not wish at present to compromise his Shakspere attitude; accordingly he gives a metaphysical portrait rather than a biographical one. He can find a "tangible personality" in their works for Balzac and Browning; he cannot or will not find one for Shakespeare. If he is a Shakespearian may we not presume that he is also a crypto-Baconian? His proper place is President of the Bacon Society.

The only portrait of this "tangible personality" is the hideous caricature of a likeness prefixed to the 1623 folio, the wooden-headed imbecility of which reduces to absurdity the attempt to find William Shakspere in the plays.

R. M. THEOBALD.

Lee, S.E., August, 1910.

# Who was Shakespeare?

## *An Appeal to Fact and Reason.*

### I.—What We Want.

Whenever the limits of permissible affirmation in any department of human circumstance are unscrupulously overpassed,—when abuses or errors, grown mountain high, obstruct the progress of society or of some section of the Commonwealth,—when blind, unbending authority and dogmatism press heavily on intellectual movement,—when tradition has spent its life,—when use and precedent in any branch of study or action make rational advancement impossible,—then is the time for single or associated reformers, inspired by enthusiastic devotion to truth, reality, and genuine culture, to raise the battle-cry, "*Quousque tandem?*" (How long is this to last?)—then is the time to sound the alarm against reaction, to awaken society to the consciousness of threatening stagnation.

A number of years ago this was the appeal of philological circles seeking to promote reform in the character of our middle schools in Germany; it is repeated now in one part of this reform, viz., the department of English instruction. Considering that our teachers of English are enjoined, among other things, to give fundamental instruction as to the meaning and origin of the most important of Shakespeare's plays, no satisfactory results, corresponding to the time and pains bestowed upon the subject, could be reached in many cases. The essential reason for this failure seems to be mainly due to the fact that the teacher could give his pupils no satisfactory information respecting the personality of the poet. According to accepted tradition we have hitherto taught views in startling contrast to all rational thinking. We were obliged to assure our pupils that an uneducated actor named Shakspere, whose life, as abundant documentary evidence shows, was passed only among persons of the lower classes, whose occupations were mean and small, whose entire life-purpose was devoted to making money, was the creator of the most glorious works in poetry that the world has ever seen. This man Shakspere, or Shaxpur,

who, from some not fully explained circumstances, was a resident in the Metropolis, became all at once, by a single bound, possessed of the extraordinarily extensive treasures of knowledge,—became the master of all the historic, legal, scientific, and philosophical lore, which we must necessarily conclude that the creator of the great dramas possessed at the outset of his career, as a necessary equipment for his work. Shakspere has, it is presumed, partly compiled, or, so to speak, patched or cobbled up these dramas. As business manager of the theatre he is supposed to have thrown off those great manifestations of knowledge and wisdom which we call the Shakespeare dramas, without being himself aware of their importance, simply for the sake of making money,—tossing them off by handfuls. The teacher of English, under these circumstances, finds himself in a somewhat perplexing position when he attempts to explain, for instance, such dramas as *Julius Cæsar* or the *Merchant of Venice*. In the first of these pieces we are amazed at the arrangement and order of the whole work, the markedly skilful selection of material which the poet has taken from Plutarch,—always, according to Professor MacCallum, adding something of his own greatness, and touching with originality the phrases which he borrowed,—a selection the chief materials of which are wonderfully coincident with those in earlier representations on the French boards. Moreover, we admire and wonder at the incomparable art of the poet in drawing his characters; his large, statesmanlike apprehension, the profoundly philosophical tendencies of the composition, all of which presupposes large and liberal study long before making use of his knowledge in dramatic construction. The imagination of the poet was evidently busily occupied with the person of *Julius Cæsar*. References to the noblest man "that ever lived in the tides of time,"—the most excellent spirit, according to Bacon, of the unconverted world,—are found plentifully in the very earliest works of the poet. An astonishing number of thoughts and views referring to Julius Cæsar are to be found in the prose writings of Francis Bacon. The words "*Et tu, Brute?*" (taken from Suetonius) carry us back to a Latin drama about Cæsar in the year 1582. How all-embracing his survey of entire antiquity! How exact his knowledge of widely differing special facts! Ever new features, new and surprising points of view, come up before us as the piece is repeatedly perused and deeply studied.

As to the anachronisms which are to be found also in this masterpiece, are we to persuade our eager scholars that the newly-arrived son of nature, the self-taught and half-educated player, Shakspere, compiling this masterpiece of *Julius Cæsar* out of old material, and without any real consciousness or

knowledge of the actual conditions and circumstances of the ancient world, fell into these mistakes? If so, and so far, the interest of our students for the poet would cease. They would see in him a genial, enterprising *ignoramus*, whose special wisdom cannot be exactly estimated; who tossed off dramas at random, and only by chance struck out something great and memorable,—the man who, as Voltaire said, like "a drunken savage," could take high jumps at any moment without effort. The rapture of the student accordingly vanishes; the illusion is dissipated; and another injurious evil result follows, viz., that inflated haughtiness and loathing which are unable to take life earnestly, being blunt or blind to those universally acknowledged truths which the true poet would impress upon us.

So the perverse materialism of the last century finds its opportunity, and pronounces the poet to be simply an interesting thought-automaton, or thinking machine, in whom "the elements were so naturally mixed" that if any inspiration from any source visited him, he straightway soared aloft in the atmosphere of creative poetry, and all at once deep philosophy, and eternal verities which he had overheard as an attentive listener, were pleasantly flung off, while he himself scarcely understood or fully grasped the import of what he wrote. Here, we find, is that sort of intellectual weariness of the literary pundits of which sensible and learned English readers complain, by which universally acknowledged truths have sunk into the most vapid commonplaces, so utterly flat and stale and unfruitful as almost to have ceased to impress us at all.

The operation of this inverted criticism must of necessity occur so long as we continue to identify the poet Shakespeare with the Stratford-on-Avon townsman. Hence that fruitlessness of labour of which we rightly, and not without some element of self-condemnation, complain. Hence also the untruthfulness, more or less conscious, by which this fictitious Shakspere is enthroned in Art which represents him,—for instance,—as the singer who chanted his rhapsodies and exhibited his fantasies before the Queen and the English Court. From this deficient veracity, as we now from a more advanced point of view may discern, the immediate consequence in England was the fabrication of false documentary evidence, which began when the Ireland forgeries were contracted. The very worst of these impostors was John Payne Collier. Mr. Sidney Lee, in his "Life of William Shakspere," p. 367, enumerates thirteen such forgeries, made in the years 1835—1849; among them the fictitious letter of Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton. By poisoning the wells of truth in this style, incalculable mischief was accomplished. Although Collier himself subsequently was

visited with merited contempt, still the effect of these falsifications, this apotheosis of a false Shakspere, in the middle of the XIXth century, could not be cancelled. This it was that caused the protesting voice of Delia Bacon to be disregarded.

On the other hand, in consequence of this underlayer of fiction, many have adopted the most senseless of all conclusions—"What does it matter who wrote these deathless dramas? We enjoy them; we delight in them; we possess them; that is enough." This bastard axiom of criticism, in which the lowest conceivable standpoint of artistic perception finds vent, is at the same time an expression of grossest thanklessness towards the true creator of the dramas.

In this jumble of contradictory ideas, in our time, the teacher of English is at a loss when he has to discourse on Shakespearean pieces that are ordinarily selected for study.

Granting this difficulty to be unavoidable in reference to the play of *Julius Cæsar*, it is contended that the teacher may at all events safely select the *Merchant of Venice* for his lectures. A Shakspere who has been concerned in so many legal processes, who in some cases has figured as a witness, who was probably (!) for some years occupied as a lawyer's clerk,—was assuredly so conversant with legal procedure that he might have written the Great Trial Scene in the fourth Act, *currente calamo*. But we pursue our enquiries by asking whence could this Shakspere, who had never seen Italy, derive the unmistakable local colouring, the exact knowledge of Northern Italy, which surprises us as we read this and other plays? Did this Shakspere in the few years during which he had to work and struggle for the primary necessities of life, besides the reading of hundreds of books, many of them rare and not easily procured, whose contents he must have mastered, at the same time make such a comprehensive study of books of Italian travel that he was enabled to produce all this local colouring with masterly accuracy? The Stratfordian is ready with the cornering assertion that Shakspere may have met with many excellent travellers who had been in Italy, and that thus he contrived to pick up the local colouring which he wanted. And so on! and so on!

And if then the diligent and conscientious teacher seeks for a solution and explanation of these difficulties in all sorts of commentaries, and at last resorts to "Shakespeare Before the Forum of Jurisprudence," by Professor Joseph Kohler, in what a labyrinth of riddles does he then find himself! Very willingly, with Professor Kohler, he recognizes and admires the almost miraculous powers of perception shown in the genius of Shakespeare, which could penetrate the most obscure and secret retreats of the history of Law as of all other parts of universal history. But how came this into the

possession of the Stratford Shakspere? Professor Kohler very judiciously remarks: "In the *Merchant of Venice* we see the development of the Law of the twelve tables. The trial scene is not a mere farce invented to serve the purpose of fancy; it is much rather a typical representation of law development for all time; it contains the very quintescence of the growth and maturity of law; the deepest stores of jurisprudence are wrapped up in its embrace."

And even this penetrating explorer of the legal question misses two very weighty points, which may be seen if we turn to Furness's excellent Variorum edition. In page 310, Furness quotes the interesting book, "The Orator, Englished in 1596," which belongs to that sort of compilations which the brothers Anthony and Francis Bacon, in conjunction with other scholars bent on the work of social amelioration, especially the Earl of Essex, undertook in the Scriptorium, or Literary Bureau, which had been formed in 1592 at Twickenham. These they published under different names as Collectanea, Miscellanies, Posies, Anthologies, Essays, Promptuaries, etc.—books intended to promote culture and education among the masses. This book, "The Orator," translated from the French of Alexandre Silvayn, contains meditations—some also newly added by the translator—on Morals, Law, &c., subjects carefully elaborated by Francis Bacon in his later work on the "Colours of Good and Evil," according to various points of view. The Declamations numbered 81 and 95 are especially instructive and important in this connection. In the former the topic is that of a surgeon who had murdered a man, in order to observe the pulsations of the heart. This involves a discussion on the question of vivisection, one of special interest to Bacon, one also on which Shakespeare, in *Cymbeline*, has expressed his opinions. The 95th Declamation concerns the legal question in the *Merchant of Venice*. A Jew has lent to a merchant 900 crowns on a bond of three months' duration, with the condition attached that in case of inability to repay the borrowed money on expiration of the term, he should give to the Jew a pound of flesh from his own body. Two weeks after the expiration of the term the Jew claims the pound of flesh as his legal right. The judge who presides over the legal process pronounces in his favour, with the provision that he himself shall cut off exactly one pound of flesh, neither more nor less, from the body of the merchant. The Jew thereupon contends that the pound of flesh must be given him, but that he is under no obligation to cut it himself, and makes his appeal to a higher court, before which, in due legal forms of advocacy, first the Jew and then the Christian enforce their claims. With Pharisaical acuteness, the Jew explains his right under law to require compliance

with his demand. The Christian replies that the Jew stands to his legal rights out of mere malice, with barbarous cruelty.

For our case there is great significance in the other writing which Furness points out—an article by J. T. Doyle, a jurist, in the *Overland Monthly* for July, 1886. According to Doyle's researches, the legal procedure described in the *Merchant of Venice* is in direct contrast to the usual legal proceedings in England from the earliest time. The procedure described in the play could never have been taken from anything that had occurred in an English Court of Justice. No evidence on oath is produced; no questions asked. The Duke has already, before the commencement of the trial, communicated in writing the whole case to the distinguished lawyer, Dr. Bellario (perhaps in flattery to Dolcalzio, who died 1607), and handed over the decision to him as referee. Also the Duke could, on his own authority, in case the learned referee should not arrive, postpone the sitting according to his pleasure. The entire procedure, according to Doyle, can only be understood by reference to the procedure and legal usages of the Venetian, *i.e.*, the Spanish-Italian law. But then it can on all points be completely explained. How, then, could the stage-player Shakspere, even supposing that other objections to his authorship are decided in his favour, how could he have known anything of the Italian law which Shakespeare represents?

Here also we must, if we are to present to our pupils a complete explanation of the piece, eject "Shakspere" and substitute a different man, a real "*Shakespeare.*" And who is with more probability to be admitted as the actual Shakespeare than the accomplished legal expert, Francis Bacon, whom the Queen many times consulted in cases of legal difficulty, and to whom so many other indications point as the actual poet?

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## II.—THE DISCOVERIES OF PROFESSOR WALLACE.

We are at present far enough off from the apprehension of the real Shakespeare as a great poet, two hundred years after Nicholas Rowe, with his absurd stories about Shakspere, definitely promoted an ordinary person to bear the robes of the greatest of poets. Twenty years later (in 1730), in Blackbourne's first English edition of Bacon's works, Dr. Rawley's collection of "Encomia Baconi," which he published in 1626, so that they might be safely handed down to all future ages, was newly printed. These "Manes Verulamiani" were again brought into fresh prominence by Professor G. Cantor in 1896. How could anyone in 1730 understand these hymns of praise in which Bacon is

honoured as the greatest of all poets? How could they have been brought into association with the dramas at a time when Pope, the clever rhymester and skilful epigrammatist, judged and slandered Bacon as "the meanest of mankind"? The poet of *Coriolanus* had the same sort of destiny in his mind when he wrote,—

> "The beast with many heads butts me away. . . .
> I shall be loved when I am lacked. . . . Our virtues
> Lie in the interpretation of the times."

So far as the interpretation of the Shakespeare poet is concerned, the earliest intimation of the path towards it is given in the introductory verses of the Great Folio of 1623, written by Ben Jonson,—

> "The figure that thou here seest put
> It was for gentle Shakespeare cut;
> Wherein the graver had a strife
> With nature to outdo the life.
> O, could he but have drawn his wit,
> As well in brass, as he has hit
> His face,—the print would then surpass
> All that was ever writ in brass.
> But since he cannot, reader, *look*
> *Not on his picture, but his book.*"

After Nicholas Rowe in the year 1709 had pointed out the false way of manufacturing Shakespeare biography, out of doubtful traditions and credible or incredible anecdotes, instead of saying honestly, "We know nothing about the poet as a person,"—from that time little care was bestowed on such biography. Under the guidance of Louis Theobald, Thomas Hanmer and others in England, as well as our own great poets in Germany, especially Goethe, the personality of the poet was first sought in the book, not the picture, and was to be found if at all in the poems. Their successors in the nineteenth century, however, in spite of the clearly expressed,—if not fully outspoken,—caution of Ben Jonson, persisted in keeping the man of straw on the throne. This would indeed have been a perfect and amazing comedy were it not that the right comprehension of the poems was thereby rendered entirely impossible. It is in vain to seek for any indications that the right track, as thus pointed out, is pursued in the recent Shakspere biography of Sidney Lee, or in those prefixed to annotated editions of the dramas. All secure pathways of discovery are hidden from view by the rank overgrowths of fiction and tradition, and we find ourselves, like Columbus in his earliest travels, in impassable shallows, blocked up by impenetrable growths of biographical conjectures, like the banks of seaweed through which the great explorer could not advance. And now in this year 1910 we are assured that at

last the veritable William Shakspere or "Shakspr" has been discovered in the documents relating to the legal proceedings in the Mountjoy-Bellott-cum-Shakspere case; and here, we are triumphantly told, is a sixth autograph to add to the precious five already known. Alas! this momentous newly-discovered document throws as little light on the poet Shakespeare as the two other dozen, more or less, documents by which we learn when and where our renowned Shakspere was baptized, married, buried, what sales and purchases he made, what lawsuits he carried on, and what kind and amount of property he bequeathed by his will to his heirs and successors. Any other similar cargo of records which may even yet be found will not change the actual and final conclusion already reached that this Shakspr, Shakespere, Shaksper, Shaxper, Shaxber—however his name may be spelt—cannot possibly be the poet Shakespeare.

By the discovery of these new facts, Professor Wallace and his wife have honestly done their duty and rendered a great service to literature. As to the actual result, that is quite another matter—quite other than what the learned professor would have us believe, according to his article in *Harper's Magazine*. The whole collection of these new facts, so diligently unearthed, simply tells us very much what we knew before, viz., that the Shakspere of whom we know more than enough,—the Shakspere of Stratford-on-Avon,—was shareholder or partly owner of two theatres, and was a stage-player of third-rate rank; that in London he became wealthy, and purchased houses and lands in Stratford. The new facts are as follows:—That he lived for some time as a lodger in the house of a tyre-maker, or hair-dresser, or hair-artist, named Mount-Joy, of Silver Street, at the corner of what is now known as Monkwell Street; that he made himself useful as an intermediary between the daughter of the house and the apprentice, who was her suitor; that he was the principal witness in the trial at law brought by Bellot, the suitor, against Mount-Joy, the tyre-maker, and that on the 11th of May, 1612, he made five very prosaic affidavits and bestowed upon us a sixth autograph. Among the eleven other witnesses we find Johanna Johnsone, wife of a basket-maker, and a hairdresser's apprentice, William Eaton, both of whom signed their depositions with a cross. With them Shakspere often had conversation, exactly at the time when the *Hamlet* quartos were published. Concerning the social position of the nine other witnesses—and whether these, except Daniell Nicholas, could write—Professor Wallace does not inform us. Also the social position of "Shakspr" is not indicated. The sixth, being in fact the earliest, of the known autographs is, if possible, more puzzling than the other five. The lawyer's clerk,

who wrote a light, flowing script, and who seemed to be under the impression that the poet William Shakespeare was to be looked for in the deponent, must have been somewhat surprised to find the cumbrous, abbreviated subscription to Shakspere's deposition. Good experts in handwriting are of an opinion that "William Shakspr" could have had very little practise in writing. We have long known that this Shakspere in the following four years had some more transactions involving money purchase or payment, and in the year 1616 died. All that relates to Shakspere after 1616, the Stratford Monument, and the dedicatory poems and preface to the 1623 Folio, are surrounded by an atmosphere of mystification which someone with no ordinary gifts of dissembling, —"*Prudentia quâdam et morigeratione usus, quanta cum simplicitate et candore conjungi potest,*"—has deliberately employed for his own purposes, with all the "prudence and consideration which can be combined with openness and simplicity."

Professor Wallace's own account of his discovery appears to modern readers—who have seen so many quasi-discoveries and real disappointments during the last few years—more of the nature of "*bluff*" than literary or scientific business. To prove this in detail is unnecessary and indeed scarcely possible until the collected documents are published in facsimile. While in these documents the full name of William Shakespeare, which had become since 1598 the recognised way of spelling the name assigned to the author of the plays, is twenty-four times employed,—only once Shaks,—it is in the highest degree surprising that in the document signed by the witness, he himself has only given his name as "Shakspr."

And whenever Professor Wallace, whose great diligence we are bound to acknowledge with gratitude, shall think it right to publish the entire case of this disclosure, we may heartily wish that the contest between "Shakspr" and "Shake-speare" might be finally concluded by discoveries of something better,—such as a letter of this Shakspere either to or from one of his distinguished contemporaries,—a genuine letter such as Collier was accustomed to produce in his forgeries. The entire result of these discoveries has brought us Germans, I apprehend, much nearer to the actual Shakespeare, but far, far away from Monkwell Street.

Meanwhile, Professor Wallace considers himself entitled to announce his discoveries with a loud flourish of trumpets. A new memorial rises before his raptured vision in the corner of Monkwell Street, "where now Shakespeare traditions swarm both from the heavens above and the sealed well beneath, that now holds its haunting plague-dead but insecurely."

## III.—UNSCIENTIFIC METHODS.

When strong belief in tradition gives wings to imagination there is no end to the resulting phantasies. This description of phantasy, which took its rise when Nicholas Rowe published his "Account of the Life of William Shakespeare," has grown into supreme developments of phantasy in the two recent works: John M. Robertson's "Montaigne and Shakespeare," and "The Man Shakespeare and His Tragic Life Story," by Frank Harris.

Many mistakes, much wandering in the labyrinth of error, might have been avoided if Augustus William Schlegel in the beginning of the XIXth Century (in the year 1808), when he declared that "all that has been told about Shakespeare's person was blind misapprehension," had at the same time introduced a more scientific method of investigation. Such an investigation should not have been postponed as soon as any doubt was raised as to the personality of the poet. The omission of such an investigation simply meant that the blunders of Nicholas Rowe were continually repeated. The inauguration of this question has been grossly hindered in England by the production of forged documents. A volume of falsification was published in the year 1796 by the two Irelands, father and son (the first a copper plate engraver and bookseller). With the Romanticists in Germany, not long after this publication, a superabundance of literary notions speedily arose, according to which "Art was conceived as in itself an independent pursuit regardless of ethical considerations." Accordingly they came unconsciously into direct contrast with the genuine Shakespeare,—who regarded his art, that is to say the luxuriant growth of poetry in the drama, his Orpheus Theatre,—as one of the means of promoting the education of man. According to the view of the poet, stage plays were so many "*Instantiæ prærogativæ seu suggestivæ*" which were to represent human nature as it exists in its height,—in its depth. The spectator is enabled to contemplate in man the "*forma angelica*," *i.e.*, the most complete and perfect development of human nature, and at the same time the *prætergenerationes*," the degenerations of human nature into wild revolting errors, so that on the one hand love and admiration for the beautiful and the good, on the other hand abhorrence of all hateful passions and crimes, shall be implanted in his mind. This dissection of the spirit of man, that is to say of human passions and affections, was to issue by slow and sure degrees in a complete understanding of the human mind, to a scientific psychology, and ultimately to new rules of law, to a rational system of legislation, to a new apprehension of nature and the universe of men and things, to a "*philosophia*

*secunda*," a revised and genuine philosophy. The poetical dramatist thus pursues a two-fold course; the first, close at hand, to supply amusement and instruction to his audience; the second, far off transcendental aim, a complete knowledge of the faculties and functions of the mind, by means of which single men or classes of men can be searched and the preservation of sound ethical and social conditions in the communities rendered possible. What is merely and only æsthetic is not, at the outset, brought into consideration. The Romanticists were thus led completely into error respecting both the person and the intentions of the poet. An earnest search for the person, which was unfortunately omitted at the right time, and which must be still very difficult, could not but lead them to Bacon and to genuine knowledge on all points.

But who, at that time, troubled himself about Bacon? Who, at that time, looked at the "Manes Verulamiani," the poems in praise of Bacon published after his death in 1626, which might have formed an introduction to the Great Folio of 1623, and which had been tossed aside as so much flotsam and jetsam into the ocean of time, and remained unappreciated when they were republished, in 1813, in the Bodleian Miscellanies? Too much praise cannot be bestowed on Professor George Cantor, of Halle, who in 1896 re-discovered, recognised and gave to the world these most significant poems. After the philosophical teachings of Delia Bacon in 1852, and after the discovery of the Northumberland House manuscripts in 1867, this was the first guide-post to a positive investigation of Bacon's claim to be the Shakespeare poet.

John M. Robertson is an example of the fact that fanatical and devoted allegiance to tradition ultimately leads to mental blindness. Many years ago, by entirely reasonable investigations, Robertson came to the same conclusion as Delia Bacon had reached in 1852, viz., that between Shakespeare's dramas and Montaigne's essays an astonishing similarity in thought and expression may be traced. This opinion is now generally acknowledged, and belongs to the very alphabet of Shakespeare enquiries. In the book to which we have referred, Robertson brings forward a large list of parallels; but with ever augmenting Bacon-hatred, or hatred of the "Baconisers," he draws from all these parallels perfectly unwarrantable conclusions. Next he combats the theory of Professor Churton Collins, who credits the poet Shakespeare with deep knowledge of the Greek classics, a theory which leads directly to Bacon. But for Mr. Robertson this is too horrible to contemplate. He maintains, through thick and thin, that Shakespeare (*i.e.*, the promoter of the Mountjoy wedding, "Shakspr"), may have obtained his unquestionable knowledge of classic

antiquity from the writings of the great Gascon. Montaigne's Essays did not appear in an English translation till 1603. The intellectual and accomplished Shakspere must then immediately have taken possession of them, and used this newly acquired knowledge in *Hamlet*. For the understanding and discovery of Montaigne's Essays he was obliged to wait till they had been translated, for it is to be assumed that he could not read French. Since, however, the familiarity of the genuine Shakespeare with Montaigne's writings is to be traced also in the earlier plays, and indeed is even evident in the earliest, Mr. Robertson is driven to the conjecture that Shakespeare had access to Florio's manuscripts, and so made his acquaintance with Montaigne before the translation was published. Everyone hastened, so it is supposed, to the great Shakspere at the corner of Silver-Street-Muggle-Street, with his completed or incompleted manuscripts, and especially the manuscripts of old theatrical pieces, in order to lighten the labours of producing the great work for the sake of which he had forsaken Stratford and settled in Muggle Street.

According to Wallace's discoveries and investigations, however, something quite different must have happened. In the family of the hairdresser, Shakspere became acquainted with a number of French persons and writings, and indeed quite as early as 1598 he eagerly turned to Montaigne's Essays, to Belleforest's "Tragic Histories," and all the rest of it. Most evidently the eager hunter after knowledge, the inquisitive Shakspere, from the very first days of his residence in Mountjoy's house, exchanged intimacy and conversation with the residents,—some of them French. Most likely he had chosen this lodgment for this very purpose. Especially with Miss Mountjoy this exchange meant daily lessons in French, paid by daily teaching of English. And curious *quid pro quos* may many a time have occurred in these interlocutions.

Here, with the tyre-maker or hairdresser, did Shakspere repeatedly, while the process of tyre-making was going on, obtain his knowledge of the world, through his skill in the acquisition of learning, and his cosmopolitan education; here he likewise acquired his knowledge of French history and of medicine, for in the same quarter of the town a well-trained surgeon lived. Who can doubt that all these weighty and striking conjectures may stand for facts?

But Mr. Robertson's speculations do not end here. As there is no record of any exchange of communications between Montaigne and Bacon, it clearly and simply follows that Bacon must have derived his knowledge of Montaigne, and his large views of the world, from the Shakespeare plays, the performance of which on the stage he would naturally

attend with tolerable regularity. "It would appear that Bacon's larger ideas had been suggested to him by the dramatist! Bacon's precise and trenchant wording in his 'Magna Instauratio' was not independent of Shakespeare's (!), and when we remember how ardent and intimate was Ben Jonson's admiration for the great Chancellor, we can fairly infer that his doctrines would come to him *viâ* Shakespeare. There is distinct and concrete ground for surmising that, in some indirect way, specific propositions passed between Bacon's circle and Shakespeare's!"

Mr. Robertson does not seem aware that Bacon had the greatest possible admiration for Montaigne, and, in this high admiration for the great and thoughtful moral philosopher, imitated his essays when he wrote his own.

As Robertson is moving on the borderland on which Shakespeare and Montaigne touch one another, and where Bacon naturally and inevitably puts in an appearance, Frank Harris conducts us to the very battlefield on which for some years the old question has been a cause of strife. What education the poet Shakespeare possessed, and whether, considering the views about the culture and the acquisition of comprehensive learning, of mammon-loving Shakspere, who brought into Court so many actions about pounds, shillings, and small pence, the exalted order of thought and the thorough learning of the gigantic genius of Shakespeare can be attributed to him, are ever pertinent questions. According to Mr. Harris's view this marriage-monger Shakespere has re-produced himself in protæan-like self-multiplication in nearly all the great characters of his dramas. Similarly Professor Dowden, in an article in the *Contemporary Review* for November, 1908, with his incomparable literary knowledge and skill, has painted a metaphysical portrait of the personality of Shakespeare.* But if we are looking for "a tangible personality" in this portraiture we are introduced to one which in all points has a surprising fitness for Francis Bacon, but has not the least resemblance to the honest lodger in Silver Street. Mr. Frank Harris treats the same theme as Professor Dowden in a widely different way. He shows how "Shakespeare" represents himself in Hamlet, Vincentio, Hotspur, and others. Even in Falstaff and Macbeth, the opposite to the self-centred Hamlet, Mr. Harris recognises the lineaments of Shakespeare. Timon is a portrait of grey-headed, aged Shakespeare, and the same applies to Antonio in the *Merchant of Venice*. Finally, in 1612, Shakspere says to himself, "I will now paint myself in all the qualities I possess," being then forty-eight years of age. And accordingly he painted Prospero. This was exactly the time

* See Translator's Preface.

when, in the Mountjoy trial, he produced the abbreviated signature of himself!

Mr. Frank Harris, who possesses the mental and moral qualities of an anti-Baconian in highest development, and who has equipped himself in fullest perfection for this department of his work, most pitilessly tramples down every dissenting opinion, and seasons his wisdom with excessively scornful insults at anyone who takes different views from his own. His favourite words (snobbery, snobbish non-essentials, &c.) that he repeats in very many variations, may perhaps be best applied as a judgment of his own work as a controversialist. It is unfortunately a characteristic feature of anti-Baconians, and has been so from the beginning, to denounce with violence all those who are of a different opinion; they cannot help treating the Baconians as imbeciles, fit subjects for a lunatic asylum. This ever-increasing tendency to impute lunacy to their opponents in the campaign of the Stratfordians against the Baconians, has been retorted in a perfectly becoming way by R. M. Theobald, M.A., in a pamphlet entitled, "The Ethics of Criticism, Illustrated by Mr. Churton Collins." This habit of the Stratfordians, which reaches its culminating height in Mr. Frank Harris's work, is gaining ever augmenting strength the more nearly we arrive at the year 1916, the ter-centenary of Shakspere's death. By much depreciation of opponents, it is supposed that the general public can, in a sort of whirlwind, be carried to Stratford-on-Avon. Are we in Germany to associate ourselves with combatants of this order? When in America every extravagance is bettered by a vaster extravagance, so that the fortunate visitor to the North Pole may be expected to yield his palm to some explorer who reaches a still more Northern height,—when in England the truth about the Shakespeare question is nearly choked, owing to the forgeries of manufactured traditions, fostered by national vanity, it may perhaps be a work allotted to Germany, as a neutral territory, to conduct "our cousins" to the conclusion that the question on which they are wrangling amounts after all to the simple matter that Bacon and Shakespeare are only different aspects of one and the same individuality.

This, certainly, will be impossible so long as we Germans continue to give a hearty welcome to any book which comes to us from England, written in favour of the traditional Shakspere, whilst we either ignore, or write down on our index-expurgatorius, every defence of the Bacon theory. How far we are led astray by this literary policy, without falling into any needful antagonism to Anglicism, may be shown by a specimen. In an article printed in the *New Vienna Tageblatt* (Jan. 13, 1910), entitled "Shakespeare at the Parting of the Ways" (Shakespeare am Scheideweg), the

writer discusses Mr. Robertson's book. He associates himself in every particular with Mr. Robertson's views, viz., that Shakespeare knew the Essays of the amiable, intellectual and most accomplished man of the world, Michel de Montaigne, and made use of them in his dramas. With Mr. Robertson he considers that the English translation of the Essays had become accessible to the poet about the year 1600 (!) and that about this time a new phase in his creative activity commenced. "Anyhow we have before us a man who, about the close of the century, stands at the parting of the ways. Glad youth and smiling enjoyment on the right; grim age, and contempt for mankind on the left. The portrait of the prematurely old man agrees with the portrait which confronts us in the Essays of Montaigne. If we bring to the consideration of this question the *fact* that the English translation of Montaigne must have come into Shakespeare's hands just at this time (1600) it is not an extravagant supposition that we can bring the soul-breathing *Hamlet* play into connection with Shakespeare's introduction to Montaigne." What backbone of scientific stability can here be found?

Without proof, as is unfortunately generally the case, Mr. Robertson's mere guesses, which we are obliged to characterize as Jack-o'-Lantern logic [Flunkerei], are accepted as simple matters of fact. Can this be endured by straightforward, unprejudiced German science?

Our German Anglicists indulge in bringing against English Baconians the reproach that they are at the best only jurists, and no philologers. How many of the Shakespearean scientists or savants in England, however, have had the advantage of a scholastic training and education such as German philologists enjoy in all stages of their course? And are not jurists, as a rule, men who are trained and accustomed to investigate, with sharpened intellectual perceptions, difficult debatable matters, even if they do not bring into their service our established traditional philological methods? How far the unfruitful methods of Shakespeare research of the XIXth century have carried us from the mind and spirit of Shakespeare is illustrated by the studies of Frederick James Furnivall, an all-round and accomplished scholar, whose deserts in other departments deserve our fullest recognition and applause. But the self-slaughtering, unproductive devotion to verse-counting and syllable-counting which he advocates and pursues, and which, from a philological point of view, can hardly be recognised as an unobjectionable pursuit of learning, carry us leagues away from the heart of Shakespeare.

It almost seems as if we are not yet prepared in Germany to encounter the new influx of senseless, soul-benumbing Shakspere cult which is ready to overflow the Continent in

consequence of the discoveries of the American Professor, Wallace. Those who have gained a clear insight into this world of thought can entertain no doubt that only a fundamental and complete reversing and revaluation of traditional conceptions and opinions in Shakespeare enquiry can bring us back to the dawn of a new long-expected day. We stand at the parting of the ways. *Videant consules!*

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## IV.—THE MAN SHAKESPEARE.

Of late years we have often heard from the opponents of the Bacon theory the assertion,—"It may be conceded as antecedently improbable that the stage-player Shakspere can have written the plays. But how could Bacon, whose life-long energies were devoted to the production and maturing of his philosophy,—how could he have found time to write the plays, and thus crowd into one man's life the work of two?" This objection is easily met.

Bacon's entire activity may be divided into two parts: the first between 1578 and 1607, the other from 1607 to 1626. He was born in 1560. The first half, that is to say the thirty years between 1578 and 1607, belong almost exclusively to the period of his poetic activity. His very learned friend and relative, Sir Thomas Bodley, his senior by sixteen years, the founder of the Bodleian Library, lectures him, in a letter brim-full of learning, dated February 19, 1607, about his recent, much too revolutionary writings, and counsels him "to learn from St. Paul *consectari meliora*, which course, would to God (to whisper so much in your ear) you had followed at first, when you fell to the study of such things as were not worthy of such a student." What these unworthy things are we may learn from an earlier letter by Bodley, of December, 1577, in which, while sending £30 to his seventeen-year-old cousin, then at Orleans, he warns him "not to spend his spirits and the precious time of his travel in an infectious collection of base vices and fashions of men and women, or the general corruption of these times, which will be of use only among humourists for jests and table-talk." So then, at this early age, did Francis Bacon, in his young maturity, begin to make his notes on the vices and corruptions of the time. In the thirty years which intervene between these two letters we must, as may be inferred from many other indications, look for the busy time devoted to his activity as Shakespeare. This was the subject of Sir Thomas Bodley's whisperings.

The later portion of Bacon's life (1607—1626) is divided between poetry, State business, and experimental philosophy.

The revision of the plays composed before 1607 and other poems, the planning and construction of some new plays, such as *The Tempest*, and lastly the production of *The Canon*, the "Tractatus qui ad populum pertinet"—*i.e.*, the Folio of 1623—form, in this division of his time, together with politics, the chief work of Bacon. The dramas are the basis, —the foundation,—of his philosophy. The fourth part of the "Magna Instauratio" is devoted to the "setting forth" examples of inquiry and invention, according to the method of the new philosophy; but the plan and execution, reserved for the fifth and sixth books, are entrusted to the future for their full recognition and development. Research into *Nature* is, before everything, research into human nature in its depths and heights,—the presentation of the same, either in *forma angelica* or in *prætergenerationes*,—that is, in their repulsive and unnatural deviations and wanderings. In the investigations touching the mind of man,—the dissection, so to speak, of the soul,—his chief labours are devoted to the knowledge of its affections, the study of character, as the foundation for which he constructed his valuable collection of *tabulæ sive exemplaria*, the *instantiæ prerogativæ* for his ethics,—that is to say, his plays. A comprehensive psychology or philosophy, a *philosophia secunda*, in contrast to the *philosophia prima*,—*i.e.*, the philosophy of antiquity,—is to follow afterwards as the work of succeeding ages. Between both stands the horrid form of scholastic science, the witch Sycorax, "who with age and envy is grown into a hoop." This "foul witch," with her natural follower, Caliban, must be utterly overthrown; but in this Bacon failed, as a world-reformer, as Hamlet also failed in his part as an actor. The victory over this dark power is represented afterwards on the boards by Prospero's art or Ariel's magic.

Such an anatomy of the human soul, *ad vivum*, had by no one, as Bacon lamented, hitherto been undertaken or pursued with any earnestness; and we may add scarcely any of the later dramatists have done anything resembling Bacon's work. With just self-appreciation he dwells on this in his Sonnets, those melancholy colloquies between his genius and the muse,—his loved one "in black ink."

The extent of his activity as a *practical* statesman is somewhat doubtful. For a strict administration of official duty he was too mild, too devoted to ideals, too philanthropic, too much like his own Hamlet, too much busied with other things. Nevertheless, he greatly desired to be occupied with State business, and under James, in 1607, he obtained the desired promotion. By this means, in his constant financial struggles, he found what he considered in the lot of Cæsar Augustus enviable advantages—the *voluptates*, the *luxus eruditus*, of which Tacitus speaks; the greatest delights in the best mental and moral pursuits; in the

pleasures of art, the gratification of the noblest senses, sight and hearing, through which the best and purest sensational enjoyments are to be attained. And by means of the influence which such a social position secures, he believed or hoped that his great purposes as a world reformer, mainly on the lines of his Orpheus Theatre, against which Bodley had protested, might to some extent be fulfilled. The education of the human race, the training and teaching the masses how to reach a worthier condition of existence ("though he would not be their bedfellow") was the ultimate end of this Orpheus of the modern world,—this Coriolanus,—who knew that a supremacy more than human, an exaltation in poetic endowments in almost supernatural measure, had been bestowed as a birthright upon him. By many different ways his desires would be fulfilled: first, by the theatre—that is, by anonymous or pseudonymous endeavours to bring before the spectators typical dramas under the symbolical name of Shakespeare (the Spear-shaker) for their pleasure, their refreshment, the improvement of their minds (*vitæ recreandæ causa*); next, by producing a number of popular collections of axioms or discourses on ethical and educational topics, the character of which we have already described, and in which he evidently, as Bodley's letter shows, made a commencement during his residence in France. In the Scriptorium at Twickenham, at all events, the repeatedly revised copies of the plays were made ready for the press. There, also, was the Bodenham series produced, with "Belvedere, or, the Garden of the Muses," as well as the "Palladis Tamia of Meres, 1598."

Since Bacon early came to see that, in order to secure the moral elevation of the masses, first of all their material conditions, "upon this bank and shoal of time," must be raised to a higher level, he formulated distinct plans in his early writing,—*partus temporis maximus*,—and fully developed them in after years, in order to inaugurate a swifter progress, a more rapid course in technical discoveries, and thus to increase the share of individuals in the benefits of earthly bliss. Those are the *parerga* of all that he sought for in his later philosophical works. The *New Atlantis*, which excited such anger in the Puritans, gives the pictures of an ideal Commonwealth, after the principles of the *philosophia secunda*,—"the modern world." The recovery of such a world, according to Bacon's "Organon," is not to be a matter of chance, but the product of scientific endeavour, an orderly, definitely planned, and accordingly successful scheme. Moreover, he thought it necessary to give some actual and typical specimens of such scientific processes, some illustrations of what he himself described as "deficiencies." He repeatedly affirmed that he had no intention of establishing

any system of philosophy,—any sect or school. In his life work the dramas,—which he had made for his own country,—formed the central point. They are the creations of which he speaks with pride in the Sonnets. Their delivery to succeeding ages, under the name of Shakespeare, was for him a matter of most serious and earnest care. Of their great value he was firmly convinced. He knew, however, the danger to which they would be exposed in the Puritan revolution; the political storms and turmoils which he clearly foresaw would occur in a few years. In the 65th Sonnet, for instance, he says:—

> "O fearful meditation! where alack
> Shall Time's best jewel from Time's chest lie hid?
> Or what strong hand can hold his swift foot back?
> Or who his spoil of beauty can forbid?
> O none, unless this miracle have might,
> That in black ink my love may still shine bright."

He must have undertaken his work with large and keen foresight (*magnâ cum prudentiâ et morigeratione*) in order to save this costly treasure, "Time's best jewel, through age's steepy night." Under the disguise of Heminge and Condell (*pro formâ*) he issued, in 1623, with the help of his friends, the first collected edition of his dramas,—probably in haste, may be through design,—done in a somewhat negligent style. Subsequent editions, the newly printed, accurately reproduced edition of 1632, the 1664 edition, with the addition of some new plays, were doubtless supervised or ordered by Dr. Rawley, in accordance with instructions which were given to him by Bacon himself; perhaps also the edition of 1685.

This, then, was the life's work of *our* Shakespeare—the real Shakespeare—the "man" Shakespeare, who was not only a philosopher but most chiefly a poet, a man of incomparable goodness of heart, and at the same time of unwearing assiduity in work for any purpose which he recognised as allotted to him by Providence. Since, however, the Shakespeare side, which was for Bacon himself both worthy of preservation and rich in its ultimate issues, remained for a long time in shadow, unseen by the world as his life's work, it follows, as a matter of necessity, that Bacon himself has been an unsolved problem to posterity; a theme for frigid respect and misunderstanding for those who, like Kuno Fischer, reading his works only in their Latin version, are inclined to see in him a heartless, morose, prosy, pedantic philosopher, "who, in his wrong-headed humours and unhistoric way of thinking, went so far as to interpret the myths of antiquity in an utterly fantastic way, as we see in his eccentric work '*De Sapientiâ Veterum*.'"

Kuno Fisher, especially, who did not understand Bacon's English style,—light of wing, and seasoned with rich and

abundant humour,—was unable to see in Bacon the playful humorist who disguised himself under the mask of the earnest philosopher. The ruling spirit of Gray's Inn, charged with wit and humour, the genial host of Gorhambury, who enchanted his numerous guests by his imaginative talk and overflowing wit; who, as Ben Jonson complained,—probably echoing the opinion of King James,—could not pass by a jest, and sometimes had, as it were, fits of sportiveness, spending day after day in strange feats of word-play and verbal pranks, was also the unhistoric wag who, in his eccentric interpretation of mythical tales,—like an Elizabethan *Punch*,—caricatured the conditions and infirmities of his time in the most lively style, or pilloried them unmercifully. Even when confined to a sick bed he could not forbear employing his enforced leisure in dictating from memory, with condensed brevity, a marvellous collection of apophthegmata, maxims, stories sparkling with wit, taken from life and history. With such puns and quibbles, hunted to the very death, this humorist, in his youthful dramas, caught the ears of the groundlings, who, like children excited by sight-seeing, exchanged their laughter for tears as the scenes of tragedy presented themselves. In order to give his hearers and spectators moments of breathing-time in the strongest tension of emotion, he made the well-known, everyday devil-porter tell stories from the chatter of old women, or allowed pleasant bits of anachronism to sport themselves for the amusement of those who could understand them. Holding before kings the glass of truth, he put into the mouths of fools the deepest worldly wisdom.

This, then, is the Shakespeare of the Baconians. For them it is impossible to keep Bacon and Shakespeare apart, or to place the money-grubbing marriage-factor "Shakspr" in his stead. For this humorist, the most merry of the merry group called Knights of the Helmet, it was easy, by means of a sportive harmless mystification, to hide himself behind the shield and helmet of the spear-swinger,—"Pallas." Whether he intended this mystification to last for ever it is not easy to decide. The disguised mystifier may have thought differently at different times, according to the motto which we find on the title-page of "Palladis Tamia" (1598)—"*Vivitur Ingenio, Cætera Mortis erunt*," (Only the mind lives, the body is food for worms). From this motto we must conclude that this Shakespeare, who was then for the first time known to the world as the author of the plays which had hitherto been published anonymously, was at that time willing to renounce for ever his own name and his family name. Indications to the contrary in Bacon's later writings show us that he was not entirely careless or unconcerned about his own immortal fame; he committed his cause to

Truth, the daughter of Time, and he was assured ultimately of more or less complete recognition. It was indeed difficult even for this great master of wisdom,—the wisest of the wise,—to sacrifice the glorious title to undying renown in favour of one of the most ordinary mortals conceivable, who, in the year 1612, wrote the immortal name on which his fame should rest as "Shakspr." In the Sonnets the real case is clear as soon as their true begetter is fixed. The two devotees, Dr. Rawley and Ben Jonson, on whom silence was imposed, did not till after Bacon's death in 1626 partially break the silence. Dr. Rawley then published the "Manes Verulamiani," avowedly withholding the best poems in praise of Bacon. Ben Jonson afterwards spoke his applause still more clearly. Following his track we are at once compelled to recognise in Bacon our "Shakespeare."

That Bacon should have left any sort of secret writing, as the cipherists—the decipherers of hidden figures, from Donelly to Owen—affirm, is in the highest degree improbable. Quite apart from secret writings, we have possibilities, probabilities and inferential facts in rich abundance, all of which encourage us to hold fast by the conviction that the genuine force of truth and reality will vindicate the confidence we place in them; for, *Magna est Veritas et prævalebit.* The Shakspere myth having well-nigh lived its life, after so long prevalence, can withstand the fiery test no longer. For nearly a hundred years past, weighty voices in Germany, England and America have been raised against it. For about the last sixty years Francis Bacon has taken the place of Shakespeare in the circle of those whose eyes are opened to see the facts. The time will assuredly come when, through documents, either found by chance or by systematic search, (which has at present been scarcely employed), it will be proved that Bacon is the true Shakespeare, and then by a mighty and judicial voice the word of doom shall be pronounced—"Talk no more so exceeding proudly." Then shall be judicially spoken, that humbling decree, that judicial sentence,—"*Courbe ta tête, Sicambre,*"—as it was spoken once to the Franconian King Clovis in the year 496 A.D. He being a heathen till then, was baptized by St. Remigius, bishop of Rheims, who addressed him in these words, "*Courbe ta tête, Sicambre,*" etc. (Bow down thy head, Sicambrian; pray to that which thou didst burn, and burn that to which thou didst formerly pray). The formula for this recantation has been provided,—

> "What a thrice double ass
> Was I, to take this drunkard for a god
> And worship this dull fool!"

For us Germans, standing on neutral ground, it were wise and prudent to raise the blinding blinkers at once, to leave

the modest *sic-mihi-videturs*, the subjective and deferential personal opinions which in this question can only lead to a feebly supported *belief*, and to clear away all the well-known surmises and speculations. With the majority of us there is an inward doubt as to the authorship of William Shakspere, and it were well to anticipate the sweeping changes that are imminent, and by a seasonable liquidation avert the great bankruptcy which awaits all conclusions resting on unsound arguments, arbitrary speculations, and romantic fictions.

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## V.—MR. G. G. GREENWOOD'S AND SIR EDWIN DURNING LAWRENCE'S JUDGMENTS RESPECTING THE RECENT DISCOVERIES OF PROFESSOR WALLACE.

Mr. Greenwood,—the author of the epoch-making book, "The Shakespeare Problem Re-stated" (1908), gives in the *National Review* for April, 1910, a spirited criticism of the work of Professor Wallace. He especially emphasizes the following points:—

1. The fact that William Shakespeare lived at the house of Montjoy or Mountjoy, the tyre-maker, a hairdresser, is stated by only one witness, who was servant to Mountjoy. What she said was that "one Mr. Shakespeare, that 'laye in the house,' did or said certain things." It is by no means apparent how long William Shakspere lodged there.

2. The witnesses all speak of one William Shakespeare, or simply Mr. Shakespeare, without adding that he was a poet, a writer of comedies, a playwright, or actor.

3. The inferences which Professor Wallace draws from the evidence of "one George Willkins," "a victualler," are simply unproved hypotheses.

4. The subscription "Willm Shaks," in "Gothic, old German Script," was not unusual at that time. The only question is whether the dramas were written in this style, which is in many respects a difficult one to read, or whether this was the style of the unblotted manuscripts. Wallace is mistaken when he maintains that very few were at that time accustomed to use the Italian Script. The Italian kind of writing was in general use among cultivated men,—for example, Ben Jonson, Spenser, Sidney, Joshua Sylvester, Francis Bacon, used it, and many others.

5. The name Mountjoy—a name which is dignified by the Shakespearean use of it for the French herald in *Henry V.*, and which Professor Wallace connects with the tyre-maker, ("What clearer proof," he triumphantly asks, "could be

required that William Shakspere of Stratford was the author of *Henry V.?*")—is taken directly out of Hollinshed's "Chronicles"!!!

6. The Mountjoy documents and facts agree throughout with the records of all other documents relating to William Shakspere. We find exactly what we might expect to find; it was among the tyre-maker class of people that the playwright, William Shakspere, or Shaxper, or "Shakspr," lived. With his distinguished contemporaries, or with the great persons of the kingdom, he never came in contact.

7. Greenwood regards the account given by Professor Wallace as a marketable commodity, "boomed in the true Atlantic style," with loud and continued flourish of trumpets.

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Sir Edwin Durning Lawrence, referring to the autograph, "Willm Shaxp," added to the deposition, says:—"If he had been able to write he would have been compelled to sign his name in full," not in the abbreviated form which we find.

As to the monument and the portrait prefixed to the 1623 Folio, this is Sir E. D. Lawrence's judgment about them:—

"The 'portrait' is a mere dummy figure, clothed in an impossible coat, cunningly composed of two left arms, cleverly united together, surmounted by a putty-faced mask, which is totally unlike the face of any human being, and which is furnished with an ear, made like a cup, to hide any real ear that might form part of any face behind the mask. It is not possible to discover a tailor who will venture to say that the coat depicted in the First Folio could by any possibility be supposed to represent a real coat. It is not possible to discover a tailor who will venture to say that this same sham coat could by any possibility have been drawn accidentally. It is not possible to discover a tailor who will fail to perceive that the coat is drawn exceedingly skilfully. It is not possible to discover a tailor who will fail to perceive that the drawing does actually represent a sham coat, composed very skilfully of the front of the left arm cunningly joined to the back of a left arm. It is not possible to discover a tailor who will venture to deny that, if he himself constructed a similar coat, the unfortunate individual who might be encased within it would present a most ridiculous appearance and would be totally unable to properly use his right arm. And beyond and beside all this it is scarcely possible to find a man, possessing ordinarily good eyesight, who, when shown a clearly printed early engraving of the 'portrait' in the First Folio could honestly venture to deny that the artist has portrayed a mask, because he must see

that there is a clearly cut black line, drawn round the edge of the mask, and that the ear is not in the least degree like any human ear that ever existed, but is plainly a cup to hide any real ear that might be behind it. The original monument was not like the present one; which shows a man with a pen in his hand. It shows a man hugging to his belly a wool sack or a pocket of hops, not holding a pen."

The plays were issued LEFT HANDEDLY, that is, were issued under the name of a mean actor, the actor Shakspere.

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